

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OSLO 06316 171412Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 OES-06 DLOS-06 SAL-01 INT-05  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 IO-13 TRSE-00  
/096 W

----- 044229 /47

R 171240Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2931  
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 6316

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PBOR UR NO  
SUBJ: REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE TO ANSWER PRESS INQUIRIES ON  
U.S./SOVIET BERING SEA BOUNDARY.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. RADICAL /LIBERAL NORWEGIAN DAILY NEWSPAPER DAGBLADET OF DECEMBER  
14, 1976 CARRIED AN "OBSERVER'S COLUMN" ON NORWEGIAN/SOVIET BARENTS  
SEA BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS WHICH OPENED IN OSLO DECEMBER 13.  
COLUMN WAS ENTITLED "BETTER TO LIVE WITH THE PROBLEMS" AND MADE THE  
POINT THAT SOVIETS MAY NOT DEPART FROM THEIR SECTOR LINE BOUNDARY  
CLAIM AND THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN INTERNATIONAL LAW WILL TEND TO  
STRENGTHEN THE SOVIET POSITION. ARTICLE CONCLUDES:

"BUT IF NORWAY IN THE LONG RUN HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO ACCEPT THE  
SECTOR LINE PRINCIPLE, IT DOES NOT MEAN WE HAVE TO MAKE A  
DECISION SOON.

" SUCH A DRASTIC REVERSAL OF THE NORWEGIAN POSITION WOULD NOT BE  
POSSIBLE IN AN ELECTION YEAR. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT MIGHT BE  
WISE FOR US TO REMEMBER THE SIMPLE, BUT NONETHELESS  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OSLO 06316 171412Z

IMPORTANT, FACT IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THAT IT  
OFTEN IS EASIER TO LIVE WITH UNSOLVED PROBLEMS THAN  
TO TRY AND BRING ABOUT A SOLUTION AT ANY COST."

2. ARTICLE ALSO CONTAINS FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON U.S./SOVIET  
BERING SEA BOUNDARY NEGOTIATION WHICH IS USED AS ILLUSTRATION OF

DEVELOPMENTS STRENGTHENING SOVIET POSITION:

" THE AMERICANS ARE AT THE MOMENT CONDUCTING NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE RUSSIONS FOR A BERING STRATI DIVIDING LINE. IT WOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE IF THESE NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE PRODUCE RESULTS BASED ON THE SECTOR PRINCIPLE, OR SOMETHING VERY CLOSE TO IT. "TO BE SURE, THE AMERICANS HAVE EARLIER EXPRESSED THE WISH THAT NORWAY NOT ACCEPT THE SECTOR LINE PRINCIPLE- AT LEAST NOT AS LONG AS THE SOVIET-AMERICAN NEGOTIATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN CONCLUDED. BUT WASHINGTON HAS LET NORWAY KNOW IT CAN EXPECT NO ACTIVE AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR THE MEDIAN LINE APPROACH." END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL--ISSUE OF U.S./SOVIET BERING SEA BOUNDARY WAS DISCUSSED ON OCTOBER 12, 1976 DURING U.S./NORWEGIAN SVALBARD CONSULTATIONS. AT THAT TIME TERRY LEITZELL OF L/OES TOLD NORWEGIANS THAT THERE WERE NO U.S./SOVIET BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS AS YET BECAUSE OF U.S. PREOCCUPATION WITH BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS IN THE SPRING OF 1977. HE ALSO SAID THAT A SECTOR LINE HAD BEEN USED IN 1867 IN ALASKA PURCHASE TREATY TO DIVIDE U.S. AND SOVIET LAND TERRITORY, THAT THERE WAS LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN OFF SHORE SECTOR LINE AND A MEDIAN LINE GOING NORTH FROM THE BERING STRAIT, AND THAT HE HAD NOT LOOKED AT THE OFF SHORE LINE GOING SOUTH. HE ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED THE OFF SHORE LINE GOING SOUTH WAS VERY COMPLICATED, THAT HE COULD SEE NO SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY A SECTOR LINE IN EITHER DIRECTION, AND THAT THE U.S. WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY ACCEPTING THE PRINCIPLE OF A SECTOR LINE, ALTHOUGH HE EXPECTED THE SOVIETS TO PUSH FOR IT. IN ADDITION WE STATED IN THE AIDE MEMOIRE WE GAVE THE NORWEGIANS ON MAY 7, 1976 THAT WE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OSLO 06316 171412Z

HAVE NEVER ACCEPTED THE SECTOR LINE APPROACH IN THE ARCTIC AND HOPED THE GON, CONSISTENT WITH ITS OWN INTERESTS, WOULD CONTINUE TO REJECT SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO SPECIFY THE CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY BY MEANS OF A SECTOR LINE.

4. EMBASSY HAS ALREADY RECEIVED TWO INQUIRIES FROM NORWEGIAN PRESS REGARDING U.S. POSITION ON BEARING SEA BOUNDARY WITH THE USSR. U.S. POSITION IN PRINCIPLE ON SECTOR LINE IS REASONABLY CLEAR FROM MAY 7 AIDE MEMOIRE AND OCTOBER SVALBARD TALKS, BUT GIVEN CLOSE ATTENTION BY PRESS AND BY GON TO NORWEGIAN/SOVIET BOUNDARY TALKS AND IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THEM IN NORWAY, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE CURRENT INFORMATION ON STATUS OF U.S./SOVIET BERING SEA BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS AND ON U.S. POSITION FOR THESE NEGOTIATIONS AS WELL AS GUIDANCE ON WHAT WE CAN TELL THE PRESS IN THIS REGARD. END CONFIDENTIAL. ANDERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** TERRITORIAL WATERS, PRESS COMMENTS, INSTRUCTIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, STRAITS, THE PRESS, WATER BOUNDARIES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 17 DEC 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** izenbei0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976OSLO06316  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760465-0028  
**From:** OSLO  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19761233/aaaabces.tel  
**Line Count:** 114  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** izenbei0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 06 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <06 MAY 2004 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <26 AUG 2004 by izenbei0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE TO ANSWER PRESS INQUIRIES ON U.S./SOVIET BERING SEA BOUNDARY. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED  
**TAGS:** PBOR, UR, NO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006